Prospects: Before You Ask Me To Stay

MaHKU @ 1st Research Pavilion, Venice
11-17 May 2015

Coordinator: Tiong Ang

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Prospects: Before You Ask Me To Stay is a one-week event conducted by MaHKU Fine Art (Utrecht). In this week, nine MaHKU students 'occupy' the Research Pavilion with multiple strategies. Individual and collaborative interventions take place, that engage with various modes of experimentation. The space is used as a research area that explores concepts of performativity, interactivity, mobility, collaboration, studies and trials. This spatial inscription allows for projects that stem from each individual practice, but also tolerate joint and mutual observations. The main incentive here is finding alternative means of expression with regard to the prospects of a developing research practice.

As a starting point, each of the MaHKU students put forward individual proposals to be developed and put in practice throughout the period in Venice. These proposals are validated as works-in-progress, and not by audience appeal or by being readily available as formal or conclusive art pieces.

The artists are invited to observe the exhibition space as mutable, organic and movable rather than representational and static. A number of projects will therefore take place in the larger environment of the convent. Other projects will even contemplate the city of Venice as a virtual location. A flexible program is developed that identifies specific performances and possible talks/conversations with other cultural practitioners, either in person or through digital means. Additionally, several video works by the MaHKU students will be screened throughout the period.

Projects range from an investigation into the local food market and its distribution processes, to performing the body as a static object, to a commemoration of the Venetian waters as both a destroying and a feeding force.

Among the programmed events are a conversation with Salwa Mikdadi, curator of Palestine c/o Venice (a crucial exhibition project that took place at the same location in 2009) and a cinematographic workshop with Alejandro Ramirez, co-author with Tiong Ang of the film House of Shyness, which is part of the exhibition of the Research Pavilion. Each day includes informal or formal talks as well as a simple dinner that others are invited to join.